

### REMARKS

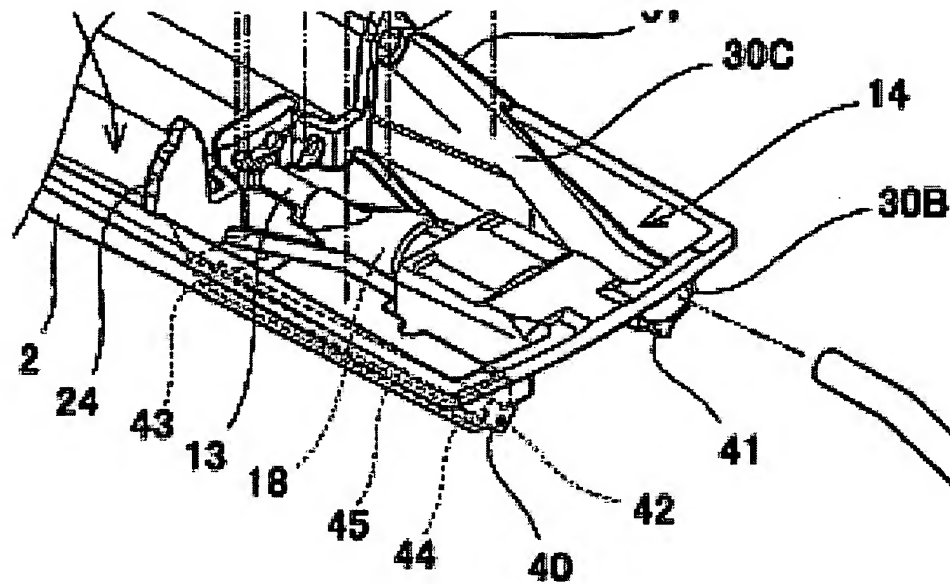
The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated November 2, 2005. Claims 2-16 are pending in the application. In the Office action, claims 4 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite, claims 2, 3 and 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) based on U.S. Pat. No. 5,376,028 to Koyanagi, claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) based on JP 05-085462 A ('462), claims 13 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Koyanagi in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,471,557 to Hattori, claims 5, 6, 8 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Koyanagi in view of Hattori, and further in view of JP10-203469 A ('469), claims 13 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on JP ('462) in view of Kelly et al., and claims 7 and 15 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants thank the Examiner for careful consideration of the application and for the indications of allowability. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections, but nevertheless amend the claims as shown above and submit the following remarks.

#### Claim 2

Claim 2 has been amended to recite a body structure of a water-jet propulsion personal watercraft, comprising a body having an inner space defined by a hull and a deck; an engine mounted within the inner space of the body; a water jet pump placed behind the engine and configured to be driven by the engine; and a bulkhead placed behind the engine and configured to separate the inner space of the body into an engine room on a front side within which the engine is contained, and a closed rear space on a rear side which surrounds the water jet pump from above and laterally; wherein a first drain hole is provided in the closed rear space of the

body so as to communicate with an outside of the watercraft to cause water to be discharged from the closed rear space to the outside; and wherein the first drain hole is formed in a rear end portion of the hull and configured to communicate with a groove formed on an inner bottom surface of the hull and inside of a chine extending along a longitudinal direction of the body on a bottom surface of the hull, the groove being configured to extend along the chine and to open into the closed rear space.

One exemplary embodiment featuring this configuration is shown in Fig. 4 (reproduced below). One potential advantage of the claimed configuration is that the rear space (14) is closed in order to contain noise from the jet pump, and the first drain hole (42) can be used to discharge water from the closed rear space to the outside so that water does not accumulate in the closed rear space. Additionally, the first drain hole (42) communicates with a groove (40A) formed on an inner bottom surface of the hull and inside of a chine (40), and the groove (40A) is configured to open into the closed rear space. With such features, water can be efficiently gathered from the interior of the closed rear space into the groove and discharged from the closed rear space. Furthermore, the groove is formed by forming the chine in the hull so this potential advantage can be achieved without further cost associated with the addition of parts.



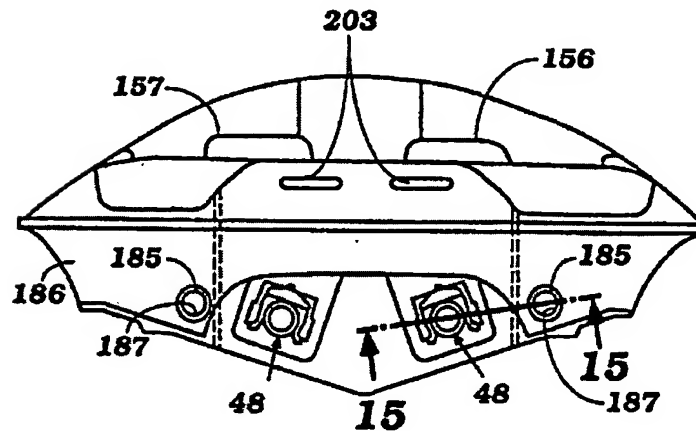
*Subject Application – Fig. 4*

In contrast, Koyanagi does not disclose a drain hole configured to communicate with a groove formed on an inner bottom surface of the hull, nor does Koyanagi disclose a closed rear space on a rear side which surrounds the water jet pump from above and laterally, as claimed. Rather, Koyanagi discloses that a first hole (187) is formed on a rear wall of a chamber (183) (see Fig. 13) and an extractor (185) is inserted into the first hole (see Fig. 8). Thus, the first hole does not allow the chamber to communicate with the outside because the extractor is inserted into the first hole. In addition, the chamber (183) does not surround the water jet pump (48) from above and laterally. In fact, the chamber (183) is completely separate from the water jet pumps (48).

Furthermore, an exhaust conduit (184) of Koyanagi is not formed on an inner bottom surface of the hull and inside of a chine. The exhaust conduit of Koyanagi does not open into the closed rear space. Thus, the exhaust conduit of Koyanagi is completely different from the

Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram of a vehicle chassis, showing a front suspension system and a rear suspension system. The front suspension includes coil springs (181, 182), shock absorbers (179), and steering knuckles (183, 184). The rear suspension includes coil springs (176, 177) and shock absorbers (178). Various components are labeled with reference numerals, including 48, 11, 10, 165, 168, 169, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, and 189.

*Koyanagi – Fig. 8*



*Koyanagi – Fig. 13*

For the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Koyanagi fails to disclose each and every element of amended claim 2, and request that the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. 102 be withdrawn. Applicant further submits that claims 3-8, which depend from claim 2, are allowable in view of the amendments to claim 2. Additional remarks regarding amendments to certain portions of these dependent claims are presented separately herein.

Amended claims 3 and 11

Amended claims 3 and 11 recite a second drain hole configured to cause water to flow from the engine room to the closed rear space. With such features, the water flows from the interior of the engine room into the closed rear space through the second hole, and is thereafter discharged to outside the watercraft through the first drain hole.

In contrast, Koyanagi fails to disclose a drain hole configured to allow an engine room and a closed rear space to communicate with each other to cause water to flow from the engine room to the closed rear space. The Office action acknowledges that Koyanagi does not show this configuration, reciting as follows:

Although the

Koyanagi reference does not show the engine room and the rear space as communicating with each other, it is noted that under certain circumstances – such as a damage/leakage of the pump, or a physical removal of the bilge conduit from the pump – the second drain hole would allow the engine room to communicate with the rear space.

For the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Koyanagi fails to disclose each and every element of amended claims 3 and 11 and request that the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. 102 be withdrawn.

#### Amended claims 4 and 12

Claims 4 and 12 have been amended to distinctly point to the subject matter (groove, chine, and bottom surface) of claims 2 and 9. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. 112 should be withdrawn.

#### Amended claim 5

Claim 5 has been amended to depend from amended claim 4.

#### Amended claims 6 and 7

Amended claim 6 recites that an exhaust pipe extends through an interior of the foam structure within the closed rear space. Such features in combination with the remaining limitations of this claim are not disclosed in any of the cited prior art.

Amended claim 7 recites that the plurality of foam structures are located on and under the exhaust pipe. Such features in combination with the remaining limitations of this claim are not disclosed in any cited prior art.

#### Amended claim 9

The claimed invention defined in amended claim 9 relates to a stand-up type watercraft. Amended claim 9 recites that a first drain hole is formed in a rear end portion of the hull to cause the water to be discharged from the closed rear space to outside the watercraft and is configured to communicate with a groove formed on an inner bottom surface of the hull.

As described above in comments on amended claim 2, such features are not disclosed in Koyanagi. Furthermore, JP05-085462A fails to disclose that the first drain hole is formed in a rear end portion of the hull, and that the drain hole is configured to communicate with a groove formed on an inner bottom surface of the hull.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that JP05-085462A fails to disclose each and every element of amended claim 9, and request that the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102 be withdrawn. Applicant further submits that claims 10-16, which depend from claim 9, are allowable in view of the amendments to claim 9. Additional remarks regarding amendments to certain of these dependent claims are presented separately herein.

Amended claim 10

Claim 10 has been amended include the limitation “groove is configured to open into the closed rear space.” As described above in comments on amended claim 2, such features are not disclosed in Koyanagi. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 102 be withdrawn.

Amended claim 13

Amended claim 13 limits amended claim 9, and recites that a foam structure is contained within the rear space, the closed rear space being positioned at a rear region of the deck and between a lower surface of a foot deck on which the operator rides and the inner bottom surface of the hull. With such features, the stand-up type personal watercraft of the present invention is able to increase a buoyant force at a region (region of a body corresponding to a foot rest) which requires the buoyant force to enable a rider to stand on the foot deck.

In contrast, Hattori appears to disclose injection of foam between the sidewalls and the hull liner. The foam structure of claim 13 is configured so as to increase buoyancy directed specifically to the area of the rear region of the deck where an operator rides in order to balance the weight of the operator. The placement of the foam in Hattori spans a majority of the hull, and differs greatly from the foam structure in amended claim 13.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103 be withdrawn.

New claim 17

The Examiner has indicated that these claim 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten claim 7 as new claim 17, which includes limitations from original claims 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, and 2. Applicants therefore believe that claim 17 is allowable.



Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, to: Mail Stop AMENDMENT, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on February 28, 2006.



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Respectfully submitted,

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